

## THE EVOLUTION OF NULL SUBJECTS IN PHILIPPINE CREOLE SPANISH

John M. Lipski

University of New Mexico

It is generally stated that (Romance-based) creole languages require obligatory overt subject pronouns (except perhaps for null expletive subjects) since all verbal inflection has been lost. Conversely, the increased use of overt subject pronouns in comparison to the lexifier languages has been used, in the interpretation of earlier documents, as a diagnostic of partial or total creolization, particularly for Spanish- and Portuguese-based creoles. In contemporary syntactic theory, the distribution and behavior of null vs. overt subject pronouns has received considerable attention, with the main issues revolving around the necessary and sufficient licensing conditions for null pronouns. 'Pro-drop' languages like Spanish and Portuguese have a rich agreement system (the AGR component of INFL), which is assumed to license null pronominals in subject position, the precise mechanism varying from model to model. Subsequent research on languages with no verbal inflection, but which allow null subjects (e.g. Chinese and Korean) has produced an expansion of the notion that only a rich verbal morphology can license null pronouns. In languages lacking verbal inflection, a 'discourse-orientation' is often required to permit a null pronoun to be coindexed with an antecedent in a higher clause, or in the preceding discourse (cf. Huang 1984). Simplifying drastically, the lack of a discourse orientation (nongap topics, etc.) disallows null subject pronouns in some languages which lack verbal inflection, while the presence of these features allows null subjects in other languages.

Discourse orientation/nongap and null topics are areal characteristics of some east Asian languages. Since Romance-based creoles do not derive from lexifier languages which completely lack verbal inflection or which have a discourse orientation, the lack of null subjects in these creoles could be a simple consequence of the lack of rich agreement morphology combined with the lack of alternative mechanisms for licensing null pronouns, the latter feature inherited from the Romance family. In the case of Ibero Romance-derived creoles, which stem from prodrop languages, the transition from null subject pronouns to obligatory overt pronouns potentially represents a drastic syntactic reorientation, resulting in significant typological differences with respect to the lexifier languages. Available evidence suggests that the evolution was gradual rather than abrupt, so that the resetting of whatever 'parameter' accounts for the presence/absence of null subjects would have taken place side by side with the development of the creole verbal system. This opens the possibility for reconstructing or observing intermediate stages, as well as for testing the accuracy of syntactic typologies as regards the classification of these creole languages.

The present study focuses on a single Spanish-based creole, Philippine Creole Spanish or Chabacano (PCS), principally the dialect of Zamboanga City. Zamboangueño Chabacano is the native language of the majority of the population of Zamboanga del Sur province, in the southwestern tip of the island of Mindanao; native speakers number in excess of 300,000, and

perhaps another 100,000-200,000 speak Zamboangueño Chabacano as a strong second language.<sup>1</sup> Unlike the moribund PCS dialects of Manila Bay (spoken in Cavite and Ternate), Zamboangueño is a vigorous and growing language, used in all aspects of daily life, including radio and television broadcasting, possessing some written literature, and recognized as the *de facto* majority language of the region. It will be shown that although PCS is nominally a non-prodrop language, and has no verbal inflection, null subjects can be licensed in certain instances. The circumstances in which such null subjects can (optionally) appear do not fit with patterns of null subject pronouns for Ibero-Romance. Nor are they fully derivable from null subject configurations permitted in the major Philippine languages which served as input during the formation of PCS. However, it will not be argued that yet another parametric option of prodrop is needed. PCS derives from the intersection of a 'classical' prodrop language (Spanish) and a language family with very different null argument options. The resulting creole language is hybrid in the extreme, and while not reducing to the simple intersection of Spanish and Philippine null argument configurations, embodies some features of both language families. The pidginized varieties of Spanish which ultimately coalesced into a creole language apparently used overt subject pronouns in fashions which differed from received Spanish of the time period (cf. Lipski 1993). At the same time, areal characteristics of major Philippine languages, in which 'subject' does not enjoy the same syntactically unambiguous status as in Romance languages, were instrumental in creating a limited pro-drop language which is typologically distinct from both its Romance and its Austronesian progenitors.

PCS, like other Ibero-Romance based creoles, lacks verbal inflection, employing instead a set of preverbal particles combined with an invariant stem (usually derived from the Spanish infinitive, but sometimes taking the 3rd person singular form as root). Like Spanish, PCS has null expletive subjects:

(1)

a. *ya tene/tiene hente na mundo* (McKaughan 1954:218)

'There were already people in the world'

b. *noay pa hente na mundo* (McKaughan 1954:216)

'There were not yet people in the world'

c. *estaba ya gayot ta kay ulan duro duro* (McKaughan 1954:214)

'Rain was [already] falling very hard'

d. Q: *Tiene muslim ke sabe chabacano?* A: *Tiene sabe, tiene no sabe* (Lipski tape Z-46)

'Are there Moslems who know Chabacano? There are [those who] know [it], there are [those who] don't know [it]'

Regardless of the syntactic mechanism proposed to account for the identification of grammatical features of null pronouns, such identification does not occur in the case of empty expletives, which need only to be licensed. Assuming that licensing of null pronouns is an issue separate from identification of grammatical features,<sup>2</sup> a language which lacks means of identification of grammatically significant pronouns will not necessarily fail to license null expletive subjects. PCS has taken over many expletive or impersonal constructions virtually unchanged.

In PCS, nonexpletive subject *pro* is ungrammatical in isolation, i.e. when no other mechanism of grammatical identification is present. This fact accounts for the fundamental classification of this language as non-prodrop (e.g. in the scheme of Gilligan 1987). There are, however, several well-defined instances where PCS departs from strict non-prodrop languages like English, and from non-prodrop Ibero-Romance based creoles like Papiamentu, Palenquero, and Cape Verdean. In some instances, PCS allows null subjects in conjoined verbal structures, where the optional presence of a conjunction between the verbs and/or the different argument structures of the individual verbs indicates that no serial construction is involved. In these cases, PCS can license null subject pronouns before the second and following verbs, provided that an overt subject occurs with the first verb.<sup>3</sup> The presence of a (optional) conjunction appears to favor null subject pronouns even more.

## (2)

- a. Mama talya na bentana ta espera konmigo (McKaughan 1954:215)

'Mama was in the window [and she was] waiting for me'

- b. Ya lyama el rey kon el baw ya pregunta konele porké ele ta karga su kasa (McKaughan 1954:216)

'The king called the turtle [and he] asked him why he carried his house'

- c. Kosa le ya ase ya sake su korta-pluma ya empesa pone aguhero na buli del mana olya (McKaughan 1954:222)

'What did he do, [he] took out his penknife [and he] began putting holes in the bottom of the pots'

- d. Mana Hapón ya tene kambyo de korasón ya manda kanamon sale (McKaughan 1954:225)

'The Japanese had a change of heart [and they] ordered us (excl.) to leave'

Although there is some syntactic evidence in favor of regarding certain conjoined clauses as not having two separate subject positions (cf. Goodall 1987), this usually occurs with a much tighter relationship between the two predicates. In Spanish, the marginal or ungrammatical status of repeated overt subject pronouns in certain conjoined constructions has at times been taken as evidence for a single subject position (e.g. Rigau 1986); in PCS, however, overt subject pronouns are never ungrammatical in conjoined constructions, and for some (perhaps most) speakers, may be required for full grammaticality.

There are also instances in which PCS null subjects occur in the absence of conjoined constructions, serial verbs, or other potential mitigating factors. In each case, the referent of the null subject pronoun is recoverable from the preceding context, usually being the same as the last-occurring overt pronoun. This usage of null subjects is most common in response to a question, with appropriate shift of pronominal reference. In some instances, null subject pronouns refer to elements more distantly removed in the preceding discourse, but this is exceptional:

## (3)

- a. El hente en bes de sende su kandela ya dale el disuyo mismo. Ya abla kon el muher ke bolbe ele el sigyente dia ... (McKaughan 1954:212)

'The person, instead of lighting her candle, gave her his. [he] said to the woman that he would return the next day.'

b. El padre ya lyeba konele resa y ya manda konele usa un krusifiho y medalya del Birhen. Despwes ya dale un kandela bendesido ke sende le y pone na su kabesa ... (McKaughan 1954:212)

'The priest had her pray and [he] ordered her to use a cruffix and a medallion of the Virgin. Then [he] gave her a blessed candle for [her] to light and for [her] to put on her head.'

c. El muher tyene myedo y ya pregunta kosa le kyere (McKaughan 1954:213)

d. Al ber el kuray kon el namuk ensegidas ya entra na aguhero (McKaughan 1954:217)  
'When the crab saw the mosquito, [he] immediately went into the hole'

e. Antes kel kon Lakian ta trabaha, ta buta lang urinola (Frake 1980:284)

'He used to work for Lakian; (he) just emptied urinals'

f. ya man-engkwentro konele na tyangge (Frake 1980:297)

'[I] met her in the market'

g. ta kamina ki kamina yo, no sabe ya yo donde ya ginda (Frake 1980:299)

'I walked and walked, I didn't know where [I] was going'

h. Ta pwede pa kome chicharon maskin kwanto bilug ya lang el dyente (Frake 1980:301)

[He] can still eat pork rinds no matter how many teeth [he has] left'

i. A las seis y media ay lyigá (Lipski tape Z-45)

'At 6:00 [the plane] will arrive'

j. Joben pa, tyene setenta cuatro año (Lipski tape Z-30)

'[I] [am] still young, [I] am 74 years old'

k. Cuando sale afuera, ya murí (Lipski tape Z-6/R)

'When [he] went outside, [he] died'

l. Ya acostumbrá ya yo usá "usted", ya aprendí na español (Lipski tape Z-43)

'I already learned to use "usted"; [I] learned [it] in Spanish'

m. Q: El mga hente di Zamboanga ta aceptá el Biblia na chabacano? A: Aceptá ya silá, el primero impulso, no quiere, acabar ta quiere quiere ya (Lipski tape Z-31)

'Q: Do the people of Zamboanga accept the [version of the] Bible in Chabacano? A: They accept it now; the first impression, [they] didn't like [it], then, [they] got to liking [it]'

n. Subí anay. Grasyas, no puede, kay tiene yo klase (Forman 1972:23)

'Come on in. Thanks, [I] can't, because I have class'

o. Aquel mga bata sabe *mancomprehend* cosa ki ta lé, y sabe escribí (Lipski tape Z-7/R)

'Those kids understand what [they] read, and [they] know how to write'

p. Quiere ba bos komigo o no quiere gayot? (PCS) (Forman 1972:165)

'Do you want [to go] with me, or don't [you] want to at all?'

q. Kwanto que ya lyibá? (Lipski tape Z-6/R)

'How much did [he] steal?'

One major difference between the null pronoun usage exemplified in (3) and licensing of null pronouns in prodrop languages is in the type of acceptability judgements offered by native speakers. In Spanish and Portuguese, speakers unhesitatingly accept any and all sentences containing null subject pronouns, and in fact prefer null pronouns to overt pronouns in most

cases. In PCS, sentences with null subject pronouns are never accepted in isolation, since the lack of AGR in these languages makes identification of the subject impossible in simple clauses. On the other hand, when presented with examples like those in (3), in which subject pronouns have been omitted following a well-defined context which permits identification, most PCS speakers acknowledge the use of null subject pronouns as acceptable. Thus, examples like (3) do not represent performance errors, hesitation phenomena or momentary lapses, and must be accounted within syntactic models of subject pronoun behavior.

In PCS, the use of null subject pronouns in impersonal constructions occurs in free alternation with the third person plural overt pronoun *silá*, reflecting (and probably deriving directly from) the Ibero-Romance option of using 3pl. verbal inflection (in the obligatory absence of overt pronouns, cf. Jaeggli 1986) or the 'impersonal *se*' for impersonal constructions:

(4)

- a. ta siña kanila "English" (Lipski tape Z-32)  
'[*pro<sub>arb</sub>*] teaches them "English" [the subject]'
- b. necesita pa gat syempre usa chabacano (Lipski tape Z-32)  
'[*pro<sub>arb</sub>*] still need to use Chabacano all the time'
- c. nuay ustedes cosa que apagá, abla silá libre (Lipski tape Z-7/R)  
'You don't have to pay anything; they say that [it is] free'
- d. ya tira konele (Lipski tape Z-7/R)  
'[*pro<sub>arb</sub>*] shot him'
- e. 'Kon ese, debe ya kon ese kuhí (Lipski tape Z-7/R)  
'[*pro<sub>arb</sub>*] should have caught him already'
- f. Ta mata konele akí na Zamboanga (Lipski tape Z-7/R)  
'[*pro<sub>arb</sub>*] killed him here in Zamboanga'
- g. si abla kamé el verdat, ay mata kanamon (Lipski tape Z-7/R)  
'If we (excl.) tell the truth, [*pro<sub>arb</sub>*] will kill us.'

Use of overt 3pl. pronouns is more frequent with verbs of reporting, or when referring to customs or activities performed by an identifiable group of people. Use of *pro<sub>arb</sub>* in turn may represent a more abstract, detached perspective. The differences between overt and null pronouns are minimal and highly permeable, and as with the *pro<sub>arb</sub>*/*se* distinction in Ibero-Romance, one form can usually be substituted for the other without substantially altering the meaning of the sentence. In PCS, use of the overt 3pl. pronoun with arbitrary reference exactly parallels the Ibero-Romance use of *pro<sub>arb</sub>* in that the speaker is necessarily excluded (cf. Suñer 1983, Jaeggli 1986).

The majority of referential null subjects in PCS occur in matrix clauses, where the null pronoun is coreferential with an NP in the preceding discourse. Null subjects in embedded clauses are relatively infrequent; there are almost no instances where a null subject in a subordinate clause is coferential with a matrix subject.<sup>4</sup> In a few cases, an overt preverbal subject in a matrix clause can bind a null subject, and very occasionally a null subject in a subordinate clause is coferential with a null matrix subject. However, a thorough search of hundreds of hours of recorded material, as well as explicit questioning of native speakers, fails to reveal any case where an overt subject in the usual postverbal position serves as antecedent

for a null subject in a lower clause. On the other hand, a null subject can bind an overt subject in a subordinate clause (e.g. 3a, 3n). This distribution differs from other AGR-less languages such as Chinese and Korean, which allow null embedded subjects, but where coreference with the matrix subject is the preferred option (e.g. via the Generalized Control Rule of Huang 1984, 1989).

It might be supposed that a PCS null 'subject' is a variable bound by a null operator, presumably in topic position. This is the approach taken, e.g. by Huang (1984, 1989) for null objects and some null subjects in Chinese. PCS, however, shows no other evidence of null topics. PCS also permits overt elements in COMP in sentences containing null subjects (e.g. 3n, 3q); in other instances, null operators in embedded clauses move first to COMP, where they cannot co-occur, e.g., with a WH-word or other operator (cf. e.g. Raposo 1986). Finally, postulating a null operator, in topic position, COMP, or elsewhere, would not account for the near impossibility of binding a null subject in a lower clause, which, as has been shown, does not usually occur in PCS.

Rizzi (1986), in developing a theory of pro which includes occurrences in subject and object position, suggests that in some languages which lack AGR, the notion of  $\Phi$ -features does not play a role in the grammar. In such languages, 'any licit occurrence of pro can be used as nonargumental, quasi-argumental, and referential' (Rizzi 1986:546). Since PCS shows no independent evidence of  $\Phi$ -features, having no person or number concordance of any kind (except for a handful of fossilized lexical items, cf. Lipski 1986), null subjects in PCS do not conform to Rizzi's original generalization (p. 543) that 'an NP is referential only if it has the specifications of person and number' and 'an NP is argumental only if it has the specification of number.'<sup>5</sup> At the same time, if the GCR does not apply to pro in PCS, as the parameterization offered by Cole (1987) would suggest, then assignment of  $\Phi$ -features to subject pro cannot take place by the usual mechanisms of coindexation with an appropriately specified governing NP or AGR.<sup>6</sup> There is no evidence to suggest that referential null subjects in PCS are anything other than pro. However, the binding restrictions need to be explained, as does the fact that the limited null subject option in PCS is typologically quite different from null subject usage in Spanish.<sup>7</sup>

The behavior of null arguments in Austronesian languages, and in particular in Philippine languages, has received relatively little attention, as compared with research e.g. on certain 'rich AGR' Romance languages, and on 'AGR-less' Asian languages such as Chinese and Korean. Contemporary Zamboangueño PCS contains the highest proportion of elements from central Philippine languages grouped under the general heading of Visayan/Cebuano (cf. Frake 1971, 1980). However, it is likely that Zamboangueño formed through the common intersection of major coastal Philippine languages, which had already absorbed large numbers of Spanish lexical items, with an additional infusion of the already-formed PCS dialects of Manila Bay (cf. Lipski 1992). It is therefore instructive to briefly consider null argument behavior in the two foremost Philippine languages, both in terms of current documentation and as regards their likely contribution to the formation of PCS: Cebuano and Tagalog. In general, Tagalog and other Philippine languages require overt subject pronouns, since verbs are not inflected for person and number. However, the term 'subject' is somewhat of a misnomer when dealing with Philippine languages; a better designation is topic-oriented languages (cf. Constantino 1965, McKaughan

1973, Schachter 1976, Schwartz 1976). Any of the nominal arguments can occupy the topic position (normally the first nominal in a clause); accompanying verbal and adjectival morphology changes accordingly. However, there are special instances where the 'subject' (i.e. topic) pronoun of a subordinate clause may be, and sometimes must be, null. Kroeger (1993:31), based on Schachter and Otnes (1972:477), observes that 'when the nominative argument of the dependent clause is coreferential with the nominative argument of the main clause, it must be deleted.' This is true regardless of whether the nominative argument occupies the topic (first) position or another argument position. For example in (5), the nominative argument of the main clause (ang bata) does not occupy the first position, but it still triggers obviation of the subordinate nominative argument (in this case, as the only argument, occupying subject position).

(5)

Tinukso ni Juan ang bata, kaya umiyak (\*siya)  
'Juan teased the child, so that (\*it) cried.'

In other types of subordinate clauses, a null pronoun is not required for a nominative argument which is coreferential to the nominative argument of the main clause, but when a null pronoun appears in the subordinate clause, it is always coreferential to the nominative argument of the main clause, regardless of the position in which the latter occurs (nominative arguments are underlined):

(6)

- a. Tinanong ni Derek si Marvin, bago umalis [siya]  
'Derek asked Marvin before [he=Marvin] left'
- b. Nagtanong si Derek kay Marvin, bago umalis [siya]  
'Derek asked Marvin before [he=Derek] left'

The reasons for obligatory null pronouns in (5) versus optional null pronouns in (6) have not yet been completely elucidated (native speakers of Tagalog consulted by the present writer found null pronouns to be optional in both cases), but these examples illustrate the limited possibilities for embedded null subjects in Tagalog. Null pronouns in subordinate clauses must corefer to the nominative argument of the immediately superior clause; no more 'distant' coreference is usually allowed.

In studying optionally null arguments in matrix clauses, McGinn (1988) has suggested that in Tagalog, only nominative subjects in preverbal position (marked by the particle ay) are governed (in this case, by ay), and thus are obligatorily realized as an overt noun or pronoun. He postulates that ay is present in the D-structure representation, signalling new information. When ay is absent, the subject is either null (presumably remaining in preverbal-ungoverned-position), or acquires government by moving postverbally, in which case it may optionally occur in overt form (7). The situation in Cebuano/Visayan is homologous.

(7)

- a. Si Pedro ay bumili ng tela  
'Pedro bought some cloth.'

- b. Bumili ng tela [si Pedro]  
'Pedro bought some cloth.'

A comparison of argument structures in PCS and Philippine languages reveals that PCS has not simply adopted the configurations of the latter languages, although a more subtle influence may be postulated. The limited use of null subjects in PCS is qualitatively different from patterns found in Philippine languages. For example, argument-bound null subjects in subordinate clauses, such as in (7), are almost never found in PCS. In Philippine languages, on the other hand, it is not customary to answer a question with a NULL SUBJECT + VERB combination. The usual answer is 'yes,' 'no,' etc. Philippine languages do permit null 'subjects' (i.e. arguments marked with NOM) as in (7b), as long as the reference can be extracted from the preceding discourse.

PCS did not directly inherit the subject/topic distinction which prevails in Philippine languages, among other reasons because PCS lacks the full verb paradigms and rich case marking which allows for multiple variants of a simple sentence e.g. in Tagalog or Cebuano. PCS marks genitive with *di* + NP, dative with *para (di)* + NP, and accusative with *kon* + NP. The morphosyntactic relations among arguments cannot be interchanged in any regular way. Sentences such as *Ta mira 'le kanamon* 'he sees us [excl.]' or *Anda 'le na di su casa* 'He's going to his house' cannot be produced with any alternative case markings, nor does PCS employ focalizing strategies such as left-dislocation to topicalize non-nominative arguments. Also lacking in PCS is a passive construction, which in Philippine languages provides another morphological alternative, allowing a non-actor to assume 'subject' status. The fact that all non-nominative case in PCS is assigned by particles provides the means for an explanation of the limited binding possibilities of embedded null subjects.

McGinn (1988)'s analysis of Tagalog can be modified to fit the PCS data. We assume that verbs in PCS do not assign case to their subcategorized arguments. Nominative case is assigned by INFL, but only to a postverbal position (under government). Case-marking particles (*con*, *di*, *para di*) assign the remaining cases. In the absence of the appropriate case-assigner, null arguments—including null direct objects—are possible in PCS.

Although PCS is a strongly VSO language, it occasionally permits preverbal subjects, but only when a highly focused reading is intended. All other (overt) subjects appear in immediate post-verbal position. In particular, pronominal subjects can never occur preverbally. If we assume an underlying SVO order, preverbal 'subject' position is not a governed position, cannot receive case, and consequently cannot be occupied by an overt subject. What appear to be preverbal 'subjects' in PCS—always referential NPs and never pronouns—are in fact left-dislocated/topicalized arguments, which receive their case through the usual chain-formation associated with topicalization (e.g. 2d, 3b, 3c). Heavy NPs are especially favored candidates for left-dislocation. Null subjects in PCS remain in the ungoverned preverbal position.

These configurations explain the binding asymmetries between null and overt subjects in PCS. A null subject cannot be bound by an overt postverbal subject in a higher clause, since the latter does not c-command the preverbal argument position of the lower clause.<sup>8</sup> It is possible for a preverbal overt 'subject' in a matrix clause (actually located in a topic position)



to bind a null subject in a lower clause (cf. example 3o), since the topicalized subject c-commands the lower clause. A null subject in the matrix clause can bind an overt postverbal subject in a subordinate clause, for example in (3a), (3n), since the preverbal null subject c-commands the lower postverbal subject. It is also possible in theory for a preverbal null subject to be bound by a null subject in a higher clause, since c-command obtains as long as the higher subject remains in preverbal position. Such double-null subject configurations are rare, given the strain placed on pronominal identification in an AGR-less language, but combinations such as *abla sabe* '[pro]<sub>i</sub> says that [pro]<sub>i</sub> knows' occasionally occur. When questioned explicitly, however, native speakers of PCS find such sentences odd and very marginal. PCS null subjects in matrix clauses are not bound to an antecedent in the syntactic sense, but rather derive their reference from pragmatic clues from the immediately preceding context, such as the frequent use of null subjects in response to a question.

From a purely syntactic point of view, nothing should exclude the possibility for a null embedded subject to take a postverbal matrix subject as antecedent. Although the higher subject would not bind the lower one (since c-command does not obtain), binding condition B would allow any antecedent outside the embedded clause to serve as antecedent for the embedded null pronoun. For embedded null subjects, however, PCS requires syntactic binding to establish the antecedent; matrix null subjects can find their antecedent anywhere in the immediately preceding context, including a left-dislocated subordinate clause from the same sentence (e.g. 3v, 3a). This suggests that the null subject is behaving just as other, sentence-initial, null subjects: it is receiving its antecedent from the immediately preceding discourse. In the special case of a left-dislocated subordinate clause, the 'immediately preceding' discourse actually contains material which is syntactically linked to the clause containing the null subject.

The licensing of embedded null subjects in PCS has retained the 'flavor' of the major Philippine languages, but has given a more Romance twist to the syntactic particulars. In Philippine languages such as Tagalog and Cebuano, an embedded null subject (i.e. nominative argument) must take as its antecedent the 'subject' (nominative argument) of the immediately superior clause (as in (6)). Since the nominative argument does not have to occupy a particular syntactic configuration in the matrix clause, and in particular since it does not have to c-command the lower subject, identification of the lower subject is dependent on morphological agreement, not syntactic configurations. PCS lacks the rich morphological structure which would allow the licensing of an embedded null subject, so the strictly syntactic condition of binding is the required configuration. Although Spanish does not place special restrictions on the binding of embedded null subjects (other than the usual binding conditions), the fact that Spanish is more generally a SVO language ensures that the higher subject will c-command the lower one. The default reading when verb morphology is ambiguous (e.g. in the third person) is for the lower null subject to take the higher one as its antecedent:<sup>9</sup>

(8)

Juan dice que vendrá

'John<sub>i</sub> says that [pro]<sub>i</sub>; i preferred] will come'

By requiring syntactic binding of an embedded null subject, PCS has compensated both for the lack of Spanish verb morphology and for the lack of Philippine case-marking, which would allow greater syntactic flexibility in the identification of null subjects in embedded clauses.

In matrix clauses, Philippine languages in turn allow arguments, including subjects, to be dropped, even in the absence of a rich verbal agreement, providing only that appropriate pragmatic identification is possible. PCS has carried over this option unchanged, as evidenced by the examples in (3). This is different from other Spanish- and Portuguese-based creoles, where use of null subjects in matrix clauses is ungrammatical.

To summarize the limited use of null referential subjects in PCS, these occur mostly in matrix clauses, where pragmatic factors supply coreference with an antecedent in the preceding discourse. When occurring in subordinate clauses, null subjects occur almost always in positions where they can be bound by their antecedents. The use of null subjects in PCS does not duplicate the allowable configurations of either Spanish or the major Philippine languages, although there is greater affinity with the latter group. PCS shares with languages such as Tagalog and Cebuano the optional availability of null arguments in matrix clauses, but employs the criteria of syntactic binding of embedded subjects in a fashion more akin to Romance language patterns. In the development of PCS, AGR was completely eroded, thus requiring overt subjects for identification. At the macro-level, PCS shares with other Ibero-Romance based creoles the required use of overt subject pronouns. A theoretical tolerance for null arguments, patterned after Philippine languages, is tempered by the inherited Ibero-Romance requirement of full identification of subjects, either through verbal inflection or through overt arguments. If PCS were merely the combination of inherited Spanish syntactic patterns and the results of universal creole traits, the existence of null referential subjects would not be predicted. The contribution of Philippine languages was decisive, for it is only via a Philippine contribution that the cluster of syntactic properties which define PCS subjects can be explained. In this and many other structures, PCS is hybrid in the extreme, as befits a language which was probably derived from the common intersection of Philippine languages already influenced by Spanish, rather than through the abrupt creolization of Spanish (cf. Lipski 1992). Whereas some creole developments may be explainable without reference to substrate areal characteristics, null subject behavior in PCS bears the traces of an extended symbiotic relation between first- and second-language varieties of Spanish and an intersection of Philippine languages.

#### APPENDIX: NULL OBJECTS IN PCS

In addition to null subjects, PCS routinely allows null direct objects, providing the referent can be extracted from the preceding discourse. This usage is strongly at variance with monolingual dialects of Spanish, which do not normally permit (definite) null objects (cf. Campos 1986, Cole 1987, Suñer and Yépez 1988, Raposo 1986, Wheeler 1982, Rizzi 1986). Some PCS examples are:

(9)

- a. *Asé seká con ese palay, ay lyeva donde ta molé el palay* (Lipski tape Z-30)  
 '[pro<sub>arb</sub>] has the rice dried, [pro<sub>arb</sub>] takes [it] to where [pro<sub>arb</sub>] grinds the rice'

- b. Q: Akí ta sembrá kapé? A: Sí, ta sembrá kamé (Lipski tape Z-30)  
 'Q: Does [pro<sub>arb</sub>] raise coffee here? A: Yes, we (excl.) raise [it]'
- c. Q: Conoce ustedes el Biblia na chabacano? A: Conoce, pero hende kitá lé (Lipski tape Z-43)  
 Q: Do you know the Chabacano [version of the] Bible? A: [We] know [it], but we don't read [it]'
- d. Q: Akí ta selebrá el Semana Santa? A: Sí, ta selebrá tamén (Lipski tape Z-30)  
 'Q: Does [pro<sub>arb</sub>] celebrate Holy Week here? A: Yes, [pro] celebrates [it] also'
- e. maskin nuay nada, mata man (Lipski tape Z-43)  
 'Even if [pro<sub>arb</sub>] has nothing, [pro<sub>arb</sub>] kills [pro<sub>arb</sub>]

Although some investigators (e.g. Huang 1984) have claimed that object pro is impossible, citing examples from several languages (including Portuguese) in which null direct objects are really variables bound by null operators. According to Huang, object pro is impossible due to the Generalized Control Rule (GCR) which essentially claims that an empty pronominal pro or PRO is controlled in its control domain (where control domain is defined as in Manzini 1983). Presumably an object pro, regardless of the presence of AGR in a given clause, would take the subject of the clause as its accessible SUBJECT, thus violating Binding Condition B. Cole (1987), after demonstrating that several languages do in fact have object pro, suggests parameterizing the GCR as to whether pro or only PRO is affected. In languages which have object pro, pro remains unaffected by the GCR.

Although a rigorous demonstration would take the present discussion far afield, null objects in PCS are usually pronominal rather than variables, which, if Cole's parameterization of the GCR is valid, would mean that the GCR does not affect pro. Cole's reformulation of the GCR was largely aimed at null objects, while Huang's original development of the GCR was designed to provide proper identification for pro in subject position. The parameterized GCR carries the added claim that subject pro in PCS cannot depend on the GCR for its reference, which means that in languages lacking AGR features, another mechanism for null subject identification must be at work.

Philippine languages also allow a variety of null objects, provided that they are coreferential either to an argument in the matrix clause, or, under circumstances which have yet to be fully clarified, when they refer to an immediately preceding discourse referent. According to McGinn (1988), this is because Tagalog verbs govern their arguments but do not assign case. Case is assigned by particles/prepositions such as *ay*, *sa*, *ng*, etc. When these elements are not present in D-structure, the respective arguments cannot be case-marked, and they are not realized on the surface. Thus, for example, *Ibinigay na* means '[it] was already given [to someone] [by someone]'. Kroeger (1993:33) observes that null arguments, including direct objects can be nominative (10a); null direct objects are somewhat less acceptable when they are non-nominative (10b):

(10)

- a. Huhugasan ko ang mga pinggan, at pupunasan mo  
 I will wash the dishes and you dry [them]

- b. Nanghuhuli ang ama ko ng isda at nagtitinda ang ina ko  
My father catches fish, and my mother sells [them]

In all cases, the antecedent must precede the null object.

# NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Data on Zamboangueño and other PCS dialects were personally collected during fieldwork in 1985, under the auspices of a Fulbright Research Fellowship. Additional information on the syntactic behavior of PCS is found in Apostol (1962-67, 1967), Batalha (1960), Batausa (1969), Domingo (1967), Evangelista (1972), Forman (1972), Frake (1971, 1980), Lipski (1986, 1992), Llamado (1972), Macansantos (1971), McKaughan (1954), Maño (1967), Miranda (1956), Riego de Dios (1976a, 1976b, 1978), Whinnom (1956).

<sup>2</sup> Although the two phenomena are frequently intertwined; cf. Hermon and Yoon (1989), Jaeggli and Safir (1989).

<sup>3</sup> This is not an automatic consequence of non-prodrop creoles, nor even of creoles which license null expletive subjects. Sao Tomé creole, like PCS, requires overt subject pronouns. However, ST permits null subject pronouns in the second and succeeding instance of conjoined sentences (Ferraz 1979:79-80). ST does not have null expletive subjects (Ferraz 1979:65). Cape Verde creole, on the other hand, allows null expletive subjects, but does not permit null subject pronouns in conjoined phrases (Silva 1957:188).

<sup>4</sup> Forman (1972:167) notes that 'zero anaphora is very frequent in Z[amboangueño] discourse.' However, he does not elaborate on this comment, although numerous examples of null arguments (some of which are reproduced in the present work) are given throughout his study.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Chung (1984) for cases of object *pro* in Chamorro in the absence of a mechanism for assigning  $\Phi$ -features.

<sup>6</sup> Rizzi (1986:546, fn. 44) comments on the fact that in Chinese and similar languages, embedded subject *pro* must corefer to the closest superordinate subject (i.e. the GCR), hinting that in at least some cases this may be a preferred tendency rather than a grammatical rule. He suggests that such behavior is best handled as a 'processing strategy,' presumably as part of discourse grammar. Raposo (1986), in turn, suggests that what appear to be null objects in Portuguese (which he analyzes as variables bound by a null operator) result from the parameterization of a rule of Predication in the LF' module, which in languages like Portuguese and Chinese can refer to a pragmatic topic.

<sup>7</sup> Forman (1972:166-7) cites evidence from some Philippine languages which also permit this type of 'zero anaphora,' and hints that Philippine language structures may lie at the root of the PCS null subjects.

\* Apparent exceptions always appear to involve the verb *abla* 'to say' in the matrix clause, together with a modal-like verb such as *puede* 'be able' or *sabe* 'know how to' in the subordinate clause. It may be that the subordinate clause is behaving as a quote (e.g. 'He said "I can"'), or that the subject of the lower verb is *pro<sub>AB</sub>* ('He said "it's possible"').

\* In subordinate clauses with subjunctive verbs, however, disjoint reference is required, since the governing category for computation of binding condition B is the matrix clause (cf. Kempchinsky 1986, Raposo 1987).

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